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STATE DOCUMENTS

Montana's Foster Parent

DEC 12 1974

sharing **News** caring

challenging

Ann Burds — Social and Rehabilitation Services, 836 Front Street, Helena, Montana

December, January '73 - '74

Dear Foster Parents:

'Tis the season to be jolly! Yes, the Christmas season is finally here. It seems like only yesterday that it was the Fourth of July and the local stores were reminding us to start our Christmas shopping early. But then Halloween came, and the Santa Claus decorations went up around town. By the time Thanksgiving was here, the holiday melted right into the Christmas season. Now, it's the middle of December and the anxiety builds. Last minute shopping, baking, and sending Christmas card greetings to long time friends is yet to be accomplished before the big day.

But wait, let's slow down. Christmas is only one day and usually by the time it's here, we're too exhausted to enjoy it. So what, if all the gifts aren't wrapped yet and you still have to find a white knit sweater with pink trim for Aunt Martha! Take the time to share the holiday spirit with your family. Last minute things always get done, and with the help of a family effort, it's a lot more enjoyable for everyone.

Think about it, Valentine's candy and shamrocks for St. Pat's Day will be on display January 2 at your local stores. So take a little time to enjoy today. Tomorrow isn't here yet.

Warmest wishes to you and your family at Christmas time and the best to you in '74.

Ann Burds

Joy To The World

MONT STATE LI
930 le Av
Helena, 5960

LET'S GET IT STARTED

GET WHAT STARTED? A special commemorative postage stamp related to foster family care.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO TAKE IN GETTING A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP ISSUED? An individual who is interested in a specific social issue should write a letter to the Office of the Postmaster General, to his Senator and to his Representative in Congress.

HOW DO I HELP GET IT STARTED? By writing to:

Dr. Gordon C. Morison
Division Manager
Philatelic Affairs Division
Office of Postmaster General
Washington, D.C. 20260

Your Senator (see below)

Your Representative in Congress (see below)

ANY IDEAS ABOUT WHAT TO INCLUDE IN MY LETTER? Anything related to:

- interest in and respect for children in foster care which would spur national attention.
- interest in the care of foster children.
- the value of foster parenthood.
- commemorating National Action for Foster Children Week.
- calling attention to the signing of the Bill of Rights for Foster Children in Independence Hall, Philadelphia on April 28, 1973.

HOW IS THE DECISION ON THE ISSUING OF A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP MADE? A citizens committee reviews the various requests and decides which of the social issues will be given a commemorative stamp. If selected a design is then drawn up based upon the information received.

WHY SHOULD I WRITE? To help dramatize the needs of children in foster family care. An expression of your interest will help a great deal in trying to get such a stamp.

LET'S GET LOTS OF LETTERS TO WASHINGTON

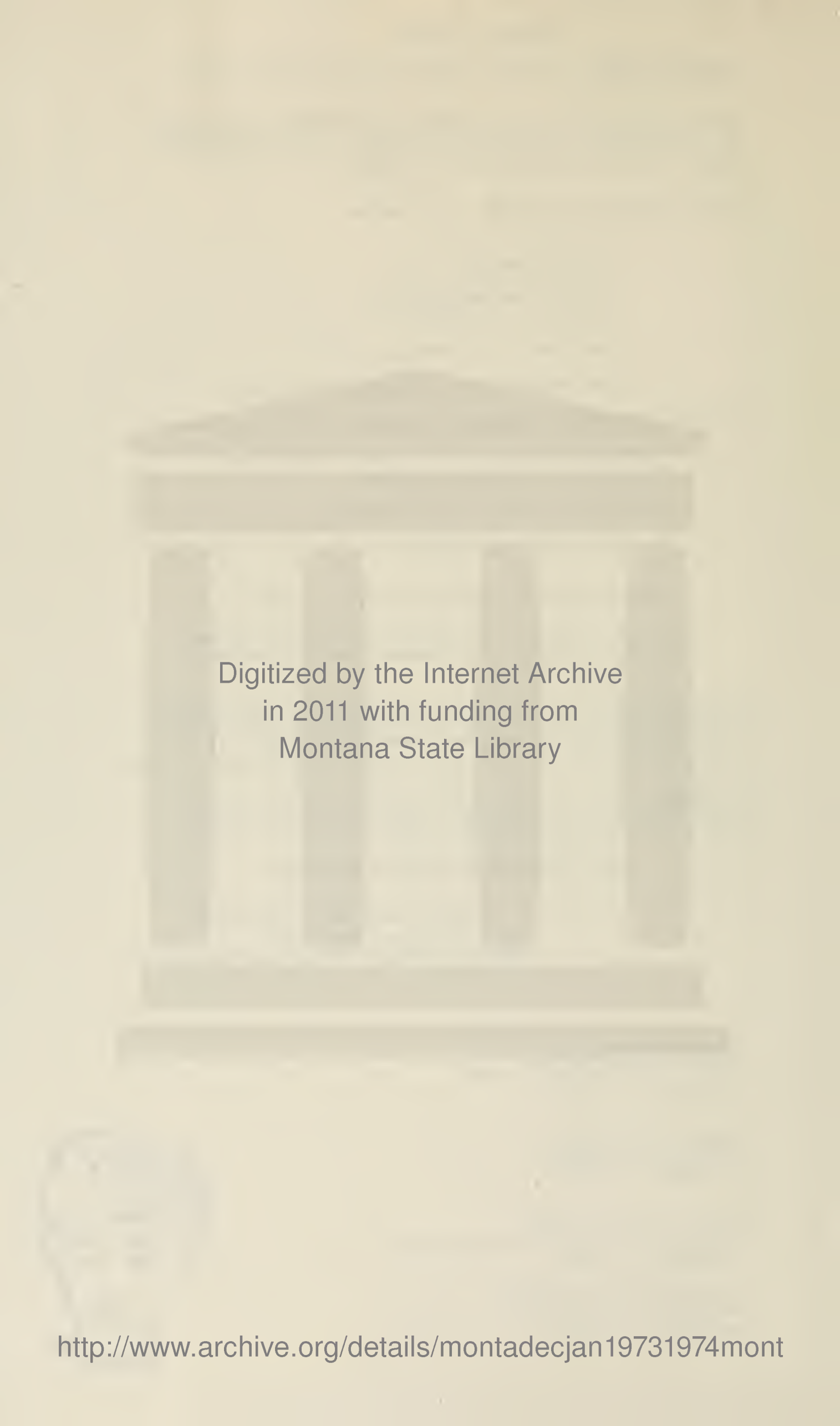
National Foster Parent Association
in cooperation with the
National Action for Foster Children Committee

Senator Mike Mansfield
Office of Senate Majority Leader
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Lee Metcalf
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Dick Shoup
House of Representatives Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative John Melcher
House of Representatives Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515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FOSTER PARENT GROUPS--OLD AND NEW--ACROSS THE STATE

Helena--Lewis and Clark Foster Parent Association will hold their Christmas Party December 18th for all children of foster parents. They're also busy writing the state constitution and attending training sessions for new foster parents. Contact John Lombardo, 442-2774, for further information.

Great Falls--Their organizational meeting will be held in January. Election of officers and the construction of a questionnaire to foster parents will take place at this meeting. They held a reception for all foster parents in Cascade County on November 29th at the Social Services Office. For more information, contact Mrs. Edith West, 761-1539, or Mrs. Wanda Wait, 761-0561.

Malta and Glasgow--Mr. and Mrs. Les Hudson, 654-2365, and Mr. and Mrs. Al Simonsen, 228-8681, are working together to start a foster parent association in this area. Please contact them if you are interested.

Sidney--A meeting to elect officers was held December 3. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Klempel reported on the State Steering Committee meeting they attended in Helena. Contact Sandy Smiley, 482-2015, for further information.

Havre--This new group has held three meetings up to this date. In January, they will hold an organizational meeting and possibly have an election of officers. Contact Ann Morrison, 265-7813, Ext. 42, or Woody Harwood, 265-2580, for more information.

Butte--Mike Kauffman, 792-0436, a social worker in Silver Bow County, reported that at the present time, they are busy recruiting for new homes, especially for the developmentally disabled. They also plan on starting a foster care association in the very near future. For more information, please contact him.

Miles City--A questionnaire was sent to all foster parents in this area. The great majority of responses showed an interest in starting an association. An organizational meeting will be held in the near future. Contact Mary Strouf, 232-1247, for more information.

Dillon--The foster parents in Beaverhead County will hold a meeting December 11th to discuss a few problems and solutions in fostering. A great amount of interest and enthusiasm is taking place in this group. Contact Joan Rebich, 683-2142, for more information.

Kalispell--A potluck Christmas party will be held December 9. A training session will take place December 11 with Norma Cutone, Social Services Specialist, as featured speaker. This group is also helping the foster parents in Libby, Lincoln County, start an organization. Contact Jessie Schlinger, 862-3758, for more information.

Billings--Big Sky Foster Home Association will hold their annual potluck Christmas party December 20, complete with Santa and gifts. Dr. Yenko from the Children's Clinic will speak at their January meeting on child abuse. Contact Mrs. Marietta Eby, 373-5896, for further information.

Missoula--Bob and Mary Palmer, 728-5891, are very interested in starting a local group of foster parents. I would strongly recommend anyone in this area to contact them if you share their interest.

Who, but a child can ask--

Where does snow come from?
How do you make peanut butter?
Can I have a little sister to play with me?
Is it fun to be a grownup?
Will Santa come even if we don't have a chimney?
What makes fingernails grow?
Why is Grandpa so fat?
When will I be tall enough to reach the sky?
Are there more seeds in a pumpkin or a watermelon?
Why did my puppy have to die?

Who, but loving parents can take the time to answer?

* Checklist of Special Instructions for Babysitter

_____ What to do about children's supper or the baby's bottle
_____ Which snacks in the refrigerator are for the sitter and the children
_____ Homework must be done before watching TV
_____ Which TV programs are permitted
_____ TV should be turned off at _____ p.m., but sitter may watch after the children are asleep
_____ Bedtime is at _____ p.m., no later
_____ Children may read or play games until bedtime
_____ Whether children may play outdoors after supper
_____ Where flashlights are located in case house lights fail
_____ Our family's rules about smoking and drinking
_____ Whether sitter can have boyfriends or girlfriends in for company
_____ Sitter's responsibility in reporting any misdemeanors by any child
_____ How to adjust thermostat if weather changes
_____ Poisons should be kept out of children's reach
_____ Where we keep our first aid kit
_____ What the sitter should do about pets
_____ How to operate our fire extinguisher
_____ How to operate the kitchen range
_____ Whether she's expected to tidy up after dinner or snacks
_____ Any other information she needs to know about the children, their sleeping habits, etc.

Phone Numbers

Fire _____ We are at _____
Police _____ _____
Hospital _____ Phone No. _____
Ambulance _____ Expect to be home by _____
Family Dr. _____

* Partially taken from Family Circle Magazine

What sunshine is to flowers
smiles are to humanity. They
are but trifles to be sure; but
scattered along life's pathway,
the good they do is inconceivable

Joseph Addison

The State Foster Parent Organization Steering Committee held a meeting on November 10th, at the State SRS Office in Helena.

Mr. Aubrey Kellogg, Regional Vice President of the National Foster Parent Association, started the meeting with an explanation of this association. He then discussed his money making project of selling records featuring the Children's Interfaith Task Force from Denver. This appears to be a very worthwhile project and a good way to benefit the local, state and national organizations.

We then discussed the appropriate process to write a state constitution. Mr. John Lombardo from Helena was elected Chairman of this Board. We will be working on the constitution here and then send out a rough draft for corrections and additions, to each of the steering committee members.

After the constitution is in the completed form, a lawyer will be contacted in order to apply for IRS tax exempt status as a non-profit organization. Following this, another steering committee meeting will then be held, possibly in mid February, to finalize the constitution.

On April 25, 26, 27, and 28th, the National Foster Parents Association Convention will be held in Spokane at the Davenport Hotel.

Then, on May 4th, 1974, the first annual Montana State Foster Parent Organization meeting will be held in Great Falls. Election of officers and other important business will take place at this meeting.

Right now, May 4th may seem to be in the very distant future. But, let me assure you, much time and energy will be spent during these intermittent months in order to form a strong organization which will be greatly beneficial to both foster parents and their foster children in Montana.

Tomorrow is today's greatest labor saving device.

1974 ACTION WEEK

National Action for Foster Children Week will be observed from March 31 to April 6, 1974. Action week is meant to be the highlight of a continuous effort throughout the year to upgrade services to foster children and their families. The Committee has selected as the 1974 objective the ratification by State, city, and county officials of the "Bill of Rights for Foster Children" during Action Week.

If you are not yet a part of National Action for Foster Children, we hope you will join this year by volunteering to help in your community.

National Action for
Foster Children Committee
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

URGENT--IMMEDIATE ACTION PLEASE

Roberta Ellis, Region V Vice President, has heard informally that the Acting Commissioner of Community Service Administration, Social Rehabilitation Service, Department of Health, Education and Welfare will NOT be authorizing states to use Title IV-A funds for the conference.

We would like to have every foster parent association or group send a letter urging the commissioner that this not be done. Additional letters should be sent to your U.S. Senators and Representatives asking their help in persuading the acting commissioner to reconsider. Their names and addresses are on another page in this newsletter.

Send letter to: Mr. John Svahn, Acting Commissioner
Community Services Administration
Social & Rehabilitation Service
Department of Health, Education & Welfare
Mary Switzer Bldg.
330 C. Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

State of Montana
Social and Rehabilitation Services
P.O. Box 1723
Helena, Montana 59601

ATTN: ANN BURDS

FIRST CLASS